

Claims

[c1] A method of printing from a computing device, said method comprising:
selecting a preferred printing device to print a print task;
sending said print task to a print processor;
checking the status of printing devices in communication with said computing device;
sending said print task from said print processor to said preferred printing device if it is available;
sending said print task from said print processor to another available printing device if the preferred printing device is not available;
sending said print task from said print processor to a busy printing device if said preferred printing device and other printing devices are unavailable.

[c2] The method of claim 1 wherein said sending comprises transmitting spool data and EMF data to a device driver which converts said spool data and said EMF data to printer ready data which is sent via a spooler to a printing device.

[c3] The method of claim 1 wherein said sending comprises transmitting printer ready data from said print processor through a printing device port to a printing device.

[c4] The method of claim 1 further comprising;
rechecking the status of said printing devices in communication with said computing device after said print task has been sent to at least one of said preferred printing device, said available printing device and said busy printing device.

[c5] The method of claim 4 further comprising resending said print task to another available printing device when said printing device to which said print task has been sent fails.

[c6] The method of claim 4 further comprising resending said print task to

another busy printing device when said printing device to which said print task has been sent fails.

- [c7] A method of printing error recovery, said method comprising:
 - sending a print task to a print processor;
 - sending said print task from said print processor to a first printing device;
 - checking the status of said printing device after said print task has been sent to said first printing device;
 - aborting said sending said print task to a first printing device and sending said print task from said print processor to a second printing device if said first printing device fails to print said print task.
- [c8] The method of claim 7 wherein said second printing device is an available device.
- [c9] The method of claim 7 wherein said second printing device is a busy device.
- [c10] A method for increasing the reliability of a printing system, said method comprising:
 - sending a print task to a print processor;
 - checking the status of printing devices in said system from said print processor;
 - sending said print task from said print processor to a first printing device;
 - rechecking the status of said first printing device during printing of said print task;
 - resending said print task to a second printing device when said first printing device fails to print said print task.
- [c11] A method for increasing the reliability of a cluster printing system, said method comprising:
 - sending a print task to a print processor;
 - checking the status of printing devices in said system from said print

processor;
splitting said print task into a plurality of modified print tasks;
sending said modified print tasks from said print processor to a first group of printing devices;
rechecking the status of printing devices within said first group of printing devices after said modified print tasks have been sent to said first group of printing devices;
resending any of said modified print tasks to a printing device other than the printing device to which it was previously sent when said any of said modified print tasks fails to print.

[c12] A computer readable medium comprising instruction for performing functions within a print processor, said instructions comprising the acts of: detecting the status of a first printing device prior to sending a print task to said first printing device; rechecking the status of said first printing device after sending a print task to said printing device; and sending said print task to a second printing device when said first printing device fails to print said print task.

[c13] A computer data signal embodied in an electronic transmission, said signal having the function of detecting printing device status with a print processor, said signal comprising instructions for: detecting the status of a printing device prior to sending a print task to said printing device; and rechecking the status of said printing device after sending a print task to said printing device.

[c14] A print processor comprising:
instructions for determining the status of a printing device prior to sending a print task to said printing device; and
instructions for determining whether said printing device has successfully printed said print task.